

ROAD CONTRACT AVERAGE IN VA. ONLY SIX MILES

Commissioner Coleman Says State Loses Money by Building Piecemeal.

RICHMOND, Va., Dec. 17.—The average mileage of contracts for road construction on the State Highway System in Virginia under way at present, is six miles according to digest of the report of State Highway Commissioner, George P. Coleman to Governor Davis. This is in contrast to the three and two-thirds miles average of 1920 and five mile average of the fiscal year ending September 30, 1921. Even an average of six miles per contract is considered piecemeal construction by the State Highway Commission, costing the State more per mile to build with greater inspection and engineering expense per mile than it would cost if the State was in a position to let larger contracts.

Plan Is Costly.
When asked an explanation as to why the State Highway Commission did not make the allocation so that larger contracts could be awarded, inasmuch as the State Highway Commission and the Commissioner recognizes that it is costing the State more money to build by piecemeal than in letting large contracts for continuous sections of State Highway, the Commissioner stated that the limited financial resources of the State for road building is the general answer. "Operating under the present financial plan," explained the Commissioner, "it will require from sixteen to eighteen years to complete our State Highway System as now constructed. The members of the State Highway Commission conceived it to be their primary duty to get the traffic over the road. In deciding on the projects to be improved, the State Highway Commission has selected the worst sections to improve first. When the State Highway Department took over the State System as designated by the General Assembly of 1918, it included many short disconnected sections of road which had previously been constructed by counties. In many instances these sections themselves were narrow and much of it had gone to pieces entirely on account of lack of maintenance. In three years the State Highway Department has not been able to replace all of the sections of State Highway system of 3,800 miles and at the same time reclaim the investments made by the counties in the short sections taken over by resurfacing and widening the sections through routes. This, with the knowledge that it will be from sixteen to eighteen years to construct the entire State Highway system often prevents the department from including the reconstruction of the State Highway which can be kept in good travelable condition for a year or so by proper maintenance, notwithstanding the fact that such action would add to the mileage of a contract.

Better Method.
Commissioner Coleman said that the work of the highway commission would be much easier if the limited funds available were placed on one, two or three through highways of the State and these roads completed throughout. The inspection and engineering costs as well as the price per mile would be lower and the work of the department more concentrated. This plan of giving preference to these roads would work a hardship on the section of the State which might not be reached for sixteen or eighteen years. "If the next General Assembly will initiate the financing of a program which will permit the completion of the system in six or seven years, it will be possible to let contracts much larger than we are able to let today, and thereby save from \$500 to \$2,500 per mile. This saving is in addition to the value of transportation service which the early completion of the State highways will make possible.

NEW LAWMAKER



RISQUE FETES MAKE PARIS SOCIETY GAY

"Baby" Party and Medical Students' "Adam and Eve" Ball Especially Unconventional.

By Universal Service.
PARIS, Dec. 17.—In revenge for the desertion of numberless stars in international society from Paris salons to Washington, the cohort of old faithfuls is making up for the diminished size of the "crowd" by the noisy, almost hysterical gaiety of their gatherings. Society, for instance, is still talking about Elsa Maxwell's "baby" party, held, it is heard, at Vell's, the restaurant on the Boulevard de la Madeleine, famous before the war as a haunt of the true Parisienne. The regulations were the same as at similar affairs, every one being told to come dressed as a baby. About forty were present and the sight of that number of Fifth avenue, Newport, and Avenue du Bois denizens all dolled up in little white socks, starched and lacy frocks reaching about as far below the waist as a baby's attire usually does, and fastened with wide pale blue sashes, not to speak of the cute little white lace caps, must have been enough for the gods. Then, there was the American medical students' ball, which as many society people attended as could successfully disguise themselves as would-be doctors and doctoresses. The dinner preceding the ball was "progressive" in the fashion invented by an English artist, who is now an R. A. and an American, now bearded and married, and drawing for the monthlies. With the soup the ladies removed their hats and the gentlemen their coats. With the fish, off came the ladies' shoes and the gentlemen's waistcoats. When the meat course arrived the men took off their collars and ties and the ladies let their hair down. According to reports, which are sufficiently lurid, the idea was carried out to its logical conclusion, the only person reneging being an American countess, who cried quits when the ice cream arrived and retired clad chiefly in confusion.

Married Three Years; Spend Time in Hiking
YORK, Pa., Dec. 17.—After hiking across the continent three times, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Richards, of New Salem, have arrived here. They are now planning to make a tour of the world and plan to visit sixty-two countries and their capitals. They have spent the three years of their married life hiking, and the tour on which they will soon leave will take eight years.

Tests Fail to Reveal New Element in Air
GENEVA, Switzerland, Dec. 17.—Researches made by C. Borel and A. Janquard and reported to the Swiss Physical Society have failed to bring to light any unknown atmospheric gas. These two scientists for two months daily diffused through quartz samples of air in the hope of finding a new element, but their efforts were fruitless.

HAIRPINS IN POLICE AUTOS AROUSE CHIEF

Men of Night Motor Patrol in Sacramento Must Explain Presence of Articles.

SACRAMENTO, Cal., Dec. 17.—Somebody started a scandal about the Sacramento police department. It hints of women—wild women—who lose their hairpins and combs "an everything." It is a scandal that speaks of lonely rides down muddy country lanes during the wee small hours of the morning. Furthermore, it has attracted official attention. It all started when Chief of Police Bernard McShane found hairpins in the back seats of police cars, which were supposed to be used only for night patrol work in the residential section.

Now Chief McShane is trying to find out what member of the local force wears hairpins.

Theft of Barrel Hoops Causes Soldier's Arrest
WINCHESTER, Va., Dec. 17.—Raymond Mauck, arrested in Warren county, Va., on a bench warrant charging him with grand larceny here, has been released on \$1,000 bail for February circuit court. He is alleged to have stolen a large number of barrel hoops belonging to the Round-Hill Orchard Company, and was indicted in October, 1920. Meanwhile, he enlisted for a year in the United States Army, and recently returned from Texas.

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